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ABSTRACT

A needs assessment was conducted with six stakeholder groups in Ohio concerned with school-to-work (STW) transition (including educators on all levels, teacher educators, and administrators of STW regions, tech prep consortia, and Private Industry Councils) to determine if they need and would use a proposed STW clearinghouse. The needs assessment involved questionnaires sent to 1,956 persons, with a response from 573 (29 percent). Results included the following: (1) a strong majority of respondents would access a clearinghouse; (2) print and electronic access, along with personal contact, are preferred; (3) respondents are primarily interested in "how to" information about curriculum, instructional materials, working with partners, and developmental initiatives; (4) at present, respondents primarily read print materials and use personal contacts to learn about STW. Recommendations were made to establish a work force development clearinghouse that would use a variety of delivery systems, emphasize personal contact, develop strong connections with professional development activities, develop materials to support increased awareness about STW, adjust to changing client needs, emphasize practical information, and avoid duplication of existing resources. (KC)

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MEETING OHIO'S NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK

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MEETING OHIO'S NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK

Prepared for

State University Education Deans
School-to-Work Systems Integration Coalition

College of Education
The Ohio State University
1945 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43210

September 1997

Executive Summary

This report presents the results of a needs assessment conducted with the following six stakeholder groups in Ohio concerned about School-to-Work (STW):

- K-12 public school educators
- Teacher educators in private colleges and universities
- Teacher educators in state-supported universities
- Members of the Executive Committees for the STW regions in Ohio
- Members of the Steering Committees for the Tech Prep Consortia in Ohio
- Members of the Private Industry Councils for the Service Delivery Areas in Ohio

A total of 1,956 potential respondents were identified, and usable questionnaires were obtained from 573 (29 percent) of them. The questionnaire that was used in the needs assessment included four primary questions about the proposed clearinghouse. The questions and the answers derived from the survey results are as follows:

1. *Would respondents access an Ohio clearinghouse that provided current sources of STW information?*

   A strong majority of the survey respondents would access a clearinghouse. Using very conservative assumptions, it appears likely that at least one-fourth of the various stakeholders across the state would access a clearinghouse.

2. *If respondents would access a clearinghouse, what kinds of access would they most prefer?*

   Among those who would or might use a clearinghouse, a combination of print and electronic access is the preferred option, but over one-third want some type of personal contact either as their only access or together with electronic/print.

3. *What types of information about STW do respondents use now and would they use in the future?*

   The stakeholders who responded are primarily interested in "how to" information about curriculum, instructional materials, working with partners, and developmental initiatives.

4. *What methods do respondents use now to obtain information about STW and what methods would they use in the future?*

   Reading print material is the highest rated and most frequent method currently used to obtain information about STW. Other highly rated methods involve some form of personal contact: talking with a colleague or expert, visiting and observing others, and participating in professional development activities.

These findings resulted in the following primary recommendation and seven implementation recommendations:

Primary Recommendation:

A Workforce Development Clearinghouse should be established to focus on the information needs of the various STW stakeholders in Ohio. This clearinghouse should link with existing resources and not duplicate their content. The clearinghouse should provide high quality information in an efficient and timely manner and be capable of ongoing adaptation as the needs of its clients change.

Implementation Recommendations:

1. The clearinghouse should use a variety of dissemination and delivery systems.

2. The clearinghouse should emphasize personal contact in dissemination and knowledge utilization.

3. The clearinghouse should develop strong connections with professional development activities.

4. The clearinghouse should develop materials that will foster and support increased awareness about STW in the education profession as well as correct misconceptions surrounding the initiative among all potential stakeholders.

5. The clearinghouse must be capable of continually adjusting to changing client needs and technological advances.

6. The clearinghouse should emphasize information with direct applications to classrooms, work-based learning sites, and connecting activities.

7. The clearinghouse should avoid duplication of effort by referring and linking users to other existing resources.

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Foreword

This is the report of a needs assessment conducted to gather information about interest in and potential usage of an Ohio Workforce Development Clearinghouse. With funding from the Ohio School-to-Work Office, the State University Education Deans of Ohio established a Systems Integration Coalition to undertake this needs assessment together with three other related inter-university projects. The Ohio State University College of Education has been pleased to provide project management for the Coalition. This report is the joint effort of a workgroup composed of these members:

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In addition to this workgroup, others, too many to name, contributed to this needs assessment. The *Technical Notes* section of this report discusses how coordinators, deans, department chairs, and the directors of JTP-Ohio administrative entities assisted the survey. Two members of the workgroup warrant individual mention, the chair Susan Imel, and Morgan Lewis, who had the main responsibility for the preparation of this report.

On behalf of the State University Education Deans of Ohio, I wish to express our appreciation to everyone who contributed to this effort. I am sure the report will be of interest and use to all who are working to build the Ohio School-to-Work system.

Nancy L. Zimpher, Chair
School-to-Work Systems Integration Coalition
Executive Dean, College of Education
The Ohio State University

Introduction

The School-To-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 has ambitious goals. It is designed to establish a national framework for comprehensive educational reform that prepares students for rewarding jobs or further education. It does so by facilitating:

> . . . the creation of a universal, high-quality school-to-work transition system that enables youth in the United States to identify and navigate paths to productive and progressively more rewarding roles in the workplace. [These goals are to be achieved by] making employers joint partners with educators in providing opportunities for all students to participate in high-quality, work-based learning experiences, [and by promoting] the formation of local partnerships that are dedicated to linking the worlds of school and work . . . .[PL 103-239, Sec. 3 (a)(1, 2, 3, 5)].

Achieving these goals will require changes in education and in the cooperation of educators with employers and other community representatives at levels far exceeding anything previously attempted. The Deans of the Colleges of Education in state-supported universities are providing leadership to several initiatives that will contribute to the proposed framework in Ohio. One of these initiatives, an Ohio Workforce Development Clearinghouse, is the subject of this report.

This report presents the results of a needs assessment conducted with the following six stakeholder groups in Ohio concerned about School-to-Work (STW):

- K-12 public school educators
- Teacher educators in private colleges and universities
- Teacher educators in state-supported universities
- Members of the Executive Committees for the STW Regions in Ohio
- Members of the Steering Committees for the Tech Prep Consortia in Ohio
- Members of the Private Industry Councils for the Service Delivery Areas in Ohio

The methods used to select samples of these groups and to distribute questionnaires to those selected are discussed in the section *Technical Notes*. A total of 1,956 potential respondents were identified, and usable questionnaires were obtained from 573 (29 percent) of them. The results in this report are based on these 573 responses.

The questionnaire that was used in the needs assessment included four primary questions about the proposed clearinghouse and an additional four questions about the characteristics of the respondents. (The sequence of the questions in the questionnaire was different than the order of their presentation in this report.) The report is organized by the results obtained from the four primary questions:

1. Would respondents access an Ohio clearinghouse that provided current sources of STW information?
2. If respondents would access a clearinghouse, what kinds of access would they most prefer?
3. What types of information about STW do respondents use now and would they use in the future?
4. What methods do respondents use now to obtain information about STW and what methods would they use in the future?

Anticipated Use of a Clearinghouse

Table 1 presents the results from the first question. These results indicate a high anticipated level of clearinghouse usage among those who returned usable questionnaires. Two-thirds of the respondents said they would use a clearinghouse and over one-fourth said they might. Only 4 percent said they definitely would not use a clearinghouse.

TABLE 1

ANTICIPATED USE OF CLEARINGHOUSE

Anticipated Use	Percent
If Ohio were to establish a Clearinghouse that would provide current sources of STW information, including Ohio, and regionally specific STW information, would you access it?	
Yes	67.8
Maybe	28.1
No	4.1

NOTE: The question on anticipated use was answered by 566 respondents.

This high level of anticipated usage must be evaluated in the context of a 29 percent response rate to the survey. The respondents who said they would use it represent only 20 percent of the original sample. If those who replied they might use it are added, anticipated usage rises to 28 percent of the original sample.

These lower figures, however, may underestimate potential usage. About 2 percent of the questionnaires were returned uncompleted but with notes stating the respondents were so uninformed about STW that they did not feel they could provide useful information. Almost certainly, many more of those who did not return questionnaires felt the same way. As STW initiatives involve more educators, interest in obtaining additional information will increase.

The answers on anticipated usage were analyzed according to stakeholder groups. The distributions from the public schools, regional executive committees, tech prep steering committees, and teacher educators in state-supported institutions were similar to the total distribution. Among these stakeholders, two-thirds to three-fourths said they would use a clearinghouse, most of the remainder said they might, and a few indicated definite *Nos*. The two atypical groups were the teacher educators in private institutions and Private Industry Councils (PIC) members[1]. Over half of the private teacher educators (58 percent) checked the *Maybe* option. One in six (16 percent) of the PIC members said they definitely would not use a clearinghouse.

These analyses produced the answer to the first question the needs assessment addressed:

1. ***Would respondents access an Ohio clearinghouse that provided current sources of STW information?***

A strong majority of the survey respondents would access a clearinghouse. Using conservative assumptions, it appears likely that about one-fourth of the various stakeholders across the state would access a clearinghouse.

Preferred Access

Respondents who answered they would or might use a clearinghouse were asked the kind of access they would **most** prefer. (*Most* was emphasized in the questionnaire.) The clear preference, selected by over half, was for a combination of electronic and print information. Table 2 presents the results. Analysis by stakeholders yielded highly similar patterns in each of the groups.

The questionnaire asked the respondents to check only one of the options, but almost one-fourth checked two or more methods. In most cases, these combinations included the electronic/print combination. When those who checked electronic/print are added to those who checked that option plus another, the total preference for electronic/print reaches 71 percent. Nevertheless, a sizeable minority (38.5 percent) expressed a desire for some type of personal contact, either as the only preference or in combination with electronic/print. The percentage who checked more than one method underscores the desire of many respondents for multiple ways to access the clearinghouse.

---

[1]For a discussion of significant differences in percentage responses, see *Technical Notes*.

These analyses produced the answer to the second question the needs assessment addressed:

> 2. ***If respondents would access a clearinghouse, what kinds of access would they most prefer?***
>
> ***Among those who would or might use a clearinghouse, a combination of print and electronic access is the preferred option, but over one-third want some type of personal contact either as their only access or together with electronic/print.***

TABLE 2

MOST PREFERRED ACCESS TO A CLEARINGHOUSE

Preferred Access	Percent
Most preferred kinds of access among those who answered ***yes*** or ***maybe*** to usage question	
Only through the Web	5.3
A combination of electronic information (Web and e-mail) and print information	55.1
Personal assistance	12.7
Telephone	4.1
Other	1.1
More than one method checked (combinations checked by 3 percent or more)[a]	
Electronic and print + personal assistance + telephone	6.3
Personal assistance + telephone	5.5
Electronic and print + personal assistance	4.1
Electronic and print + telephone	3.5
Other combinations checked by less than 3 percent	2.4

NOTE: The question on preferred access was answered by 543 respondents.
[a]The question asked respondents to check only the one access they would ***most*** prefer, but 22 percent checked more than one option.

Information Used

The third major question of the needs assessment concerned information about STW. The questionnaire listed 16 different categories and asked the respondents to indicate if they used each kind of information now and if they anticipated using it in the future. The respondents were also asked to rate the importance of the category on a four-point scale that defined 1 as unimportant and 4 as very important. Table 3 shows the

categories that received the three highest and three lowest mean importance ratings. Appendix Table 1 presents the results for all 16 categories.

Approximately two-thirds to three-fourths of the respondents rated the three highest categories of high importance and one-fourth to one-third rated them of very high importance. The proportions reporting they currently used information in these categories ranged from a little over one-fourth to one-third. Almost everyone who is not using information in these categories now said they would use it in the future.

TABLE 3

INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, ITEMS WITH THREE HIGHEST AND LOWEST MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, PERCENT WHO USE SUCH INFORMATION NOW AND WILL IN THE FUTURE

Information Used	Mean[a]	S.D.	Percent	
			Use Now	Will Use
Three Highest Mean Ratings				
Curriculum and instructional materials appropriate for STW initiatives (e.g., existing materials that can be used in STW)	3.37	.81	28	70
Information about working with businesses (e.g., how to make connections with business, contact information for those programs that have made connections and so forth)	3.25	.91	34	60
Basic developmental information (e.g., how to structure STW initiatives, guidelines for development, implementation ideas, and so forth)	3.24	.89	33	61
Three Lowest Mean Ratings				
Information about Ohio's STW activities (e.g., how is Ohio's STW system structured, RFPs, what initiatives have been funded, who directs the efforts at the state and regional levels, etc.)	2.79	.95	26	62
Information about working with unions	2.64	1.02	18	59
An overview of national STW efforts (e.g. states that are involved, focus of their activities, pilot sites and so forth)	2.48	.91	15	63

NOTE: The number of respondents to the separate items in question 1 ranged from 545 to 564. The average number of respondents over all items was 557.

[a]Means are based on a four-point rating scale with the numbers defined as follows: 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = unimportant

The contents of the three highest rated categories refer to curriculum and instructional materials, working with businesses, and developmental information. As would be expected, the PIC respondents rated curriculum and developmental information lower than the other groups (Table 4)[2]. As might also have been expected, the teacher educators, both public and private, rated information about working with businesses lower than the other groups did. Table 4 presents the mean importance ratings for the three highest and lowest items by the six stakeholder groups

The kinds of information not shown in Table 3 that received mean ratings of 3.00 or more also relate to how to implement STW initiatives (Appendix Table 1). They refer to labor market information, how to develop instructional materials, working with educators and community-based organizations, and marketing STW. The high average rating of working with educators is surprising since almost 9 out of 10 of the respondents are educators. The stakeholder group that rated information about working with educators the highest was teacher educators in private colleges and universities.

The three lowest rated categories were a half rating point or more below the three highest rated. Nevertheless, the three lowest rated were still considered important by half or more of the respondents. Over three-fourths of the respondents also said that they used the kinds of information in these categories now or they would use it in the future.

These three lowest categories involve general information about state and national STW activities and on working with unions. In comparison to the other 13 kinds of information, the respondents considered these topics of lower importance. The teacher educators, as they had with businesses, gave the lowest ratings to information about working with unions. Members of STW regional executive committees tended to give the three lowest categories higher ratings than the other groups did.

These analyses produced the answer to the third question the needs assessment addressed:

> 3. ***What types of information about STW do respondents use now and would they use in the future?***
>
> ***The stakeholders who responded are primarily interested in "how to" information about curriculum, instructional materials, working with partners, and developmental initiatives***

---

[2]For a discussion of significant differences in mean importance ratings see *Technical Notes.*

TABLE 4

INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, ITEMS WITH THREE HIGHEST AND LOWEST MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, BY STAKEHOLDERS

Types of Information Three Highest and Lowest Mean Ratings	Public School	Region Exec Comm.	Tech Prep	PIC	State Teacher Ed.	Private Teacher Ed.	Total
Curriculum and instructional materials appropriate for STW initiatives (e.g., existing materials that can be used in STW)	3.47[a]	3.36	3.42	2.83	3.16	3.19	3.37
Information about working with businesses (e.g., how to make connections with business, contact information for those programs that have made connections and so forth)	3.32	3.43	3.31	3.28	2.85	2.52	3.25
Basic developmental information (e.g., how to structure STW initiatives, guidelines for development, implementation ideas, and so forth)	3.29	3.20	3.27	2.97	3.17	3.22	3.24
Information about Ohio's STW activities (e.g., how is Ohio's STW system structured, RFPs, what initiatives have been funded, who directs the efforts at the state and regional levels, etc.)	2.68	3.00	2.87	3.03	2.77	2.63	2.79
Information about working with unions	2.56	3.10	2.78	2.59	2.19	2.13	2.64
An overview of national STW efforts (e.g., states that are involved, focus of their activities, pilot sites and so forth)	2.40	2.70	2.37	2.68	2.58	2.50	2.48
Average Number in Stakeholder Groups[b]	253	88	106	30	48	30	555

[a]Means are based on a four-point rating scale with the numbers defined as follows:
4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = unimportant

[b]The number reported is the average of the respondents that rated the separate items.

Methods Used To Obtain Information

The questionnaire listed 13 methods that could be used to obtain information about STW. As with the categories of information, the respondents were asked to indicate if they used each of the methods currently, if they would use them in the future, and to rate their importance on the same four-point scale. Table 5 presents the results for the three highest and lowest rated methods. Appendix Table 2 has the results for all 13 methods.

TABLE 5

METHODS USED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, ITEMS WITH THREE HIGHEST AND LOWEST MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, PERCENT WHO USE SUCH METHODS NOW AND WILL IN THE FUTURE

Methods Used	Mean[a]	S.D.	Percent	
			Use Now	Will Use
Three Highest Mean Ratings				
Read relevant materials (e.g., books, journal articles, newsletters)	3.21	.77	58	46
Talk to a knowledgeable colleague	3.20	.82	46	50
Attend meetings, seminars, or conferences (e.g., professional/leadership development activities)	3.12	.87	44	50
Three Lowest Mean Ratings				
Search electronic databases	2.51	.95	14	60
Ask a librarian for assistance	2.28	.90	22	50
Teleconferences, telebriefings	2.20	.89	10	57

NOTE: The number of respondents to the separate items in question 2 ranged from 517 to 561. The average number of respondents over all items was 539.

[a]Means are based on a four-point rating scale with the numbers defined as follows:
4 = very important , 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = unimportant

With two exceptions, the mean ratings reflect a general preference for obtaining information through some type of personal interaction. The exceptions are for the highest rated method–reading–and the next to lowest rated method–asking a librarian. The highest rated method shows that electronic media have not yet replaced print as the primary source of information. The low rating for librarians reflects the specialized

nature of STW information. With STW still an ill-defined concept to many educators, it would be unlikely for many librarians to be informed.

The importance ratings of the 13 methods were analyzed across stakeholder groups. Table 6 contains the results for the three highest and lowest rated methods. There are few major differences among the groups. Teacher educators, both public and private, tend to rate reading a little higher and various personal contacts a little lower than other groups. The public school respondents rated librarians the highest of any of the groups. Because the public school respondents constituted almost half of the total sample, their ratings pulled up the total mean for librarians. The lowest mean of all was for teleconferences, telebriefings among teacher educators in private institutions.

These analyses produced the answer to the fourth question the needs assessment addressed:

> 4. ***What methods do respondents use now to obtain information about STW and what methods would they use in the future?***
>
> ***Reading print material is the highest rated and most frequent method currently used to obtain information about STW. Other highly rated methods involve some form of personal contact: talking with a colleague or expert, visiting and observing others, and participating in professional development activities.***

Written-In Suggestions and Comments

As the final question in the survey, respondents were asked "to suggest ideas to make the proposed STW Clearinghouse for Ohio as useful as possible." Many different ideas were offered. In addition, some of the other questions invited the respondents to write in options that were not among those printed in the questionnaire. Attached as an appendix to the report is a synthesis of the suggestions and comments that were written in by respondents.

TABLE 6

METHODS USED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, ITEMS WITH THREE HIGHEST AND LOWEST MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, BY STAKEHOLDERS

Methods Used	Public School	Region Exec. Comm.	Tech Prep	PIC	State Teacher Ed.	Private Teacher Ed.	Total
Three Highest Mean Ratings							
Read relevant materials (e.g., books, journal articles, newsletters)	3.18[a]	3.17	3.19	3.07	3.48	3.25	3.21
Talk to a knowledgeable colleague	3.25	3.15	3.33	3.00	2.88	2.97	3.20
Attend meetings, seminars, or conferences (e.g., professional/ leadership development activities)	3.17	3.20	3.28	3.00	2.67	2.62	3.12
Three Lowest Mean Ratings							
Search electronic databases	2.45	2.40	2.67	2.60	2.72	2.60	2.51
Ask a librarian for assistance	2.52	1.94	2.13	1.87	2.15	2.23	2.28
Teleconferences, telebriefings	2.13	2.37	2.46	2.08	2.13	1.70	2.20
Average Number in Groups[b]	246	84	102	26	47	29	534

[a]Means are based on a four-point rating scale with the numbers defined as follows:
4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = unimportant

[b]The number reported is the average of the number that rated the separate items.

Characteristics of Respondents

The *Technical Notes* section of this report describes the methods used to define the population and draw the sample used in the needs assessment. Table 7 presents the gender, race/ethnicity, and geographic areas of those who returned usable questionnaires.

TABLE 7

GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, AND GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF RESPONDENTS

Characteristics	Percent
Gender	
Male	50.8
Female	49.2
Ethnic/Racial Background	
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.5
Black (not of Hispanic Origin)	6.2
Hispanic	1.2
White (not of Hispanic Origin)	91.1
Multiracial	0.5
Other	0.2
Type of Geographic Area Served by Organization	
Urban (city of 50,000 or more)	29.6
Suburban (separate city in urban area)	29.8
Small city, village	37.8
Rural	37.5
Total	134.7[a]

NOTE: The number of respondents to these questions ranged from 561 to 571. The average number of respondents was 566.

[a]Total exceeds 100 percent to the extent that respondents reported their organizations served more than one type of geographic area.

Survey respondents were equally divided by gender, and fairly equally distributed by geographic areas. Slightly more than 9 out of 10 of the respondents identified themselves as white, not of Hispanic origin. The most recent U.S. Census Bureau (1996) projections for Ohio estimate that 87 percent of the total population is white. Statistics from the Ohio Department of Education (1997) show 93 percent of staff in all schools in the state are white. Table 8 shows that 16 percent of the respondents were not educators. The noneducators were almost entirely from the Private Industry Councils, Tech Prep Steering Committees, and STW Regional Executive Committees.

TABLE 8

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Characteristics	Percent
Type of Organization	
Small Business (Under 100 employees)	3.7
Medium-Sized Business (100 to 499 employees)	1.2
Large Business (Over 500 employees)	2.6
Public Sector (local or state government, e.g., Human Services, JTP-Ohio)	5.1
Community-Based Organization	3.3
Elementary School	11.4
Middle School.	8.4
High School	28.0
Central Office (K-12 district)	11.5
Two-year Technical School or Community College	5.4
Four-year College or University	14.9
Other	2.6
Respondents' Role/Position/Title in Organization	
President, CEO, Executive Director, Superintendent	18.2
Associate Director, Principal, Dean, Coordinator	29.3
Supervisor, Associate, Teacher, Professor, Counselor	45.6
Parent, Student	1.1
Other	5.8
Stakeholder Group	
Private Industry Councils	5.4
Public Schools	46.1
Private Teacher Education Institutions	5.4
State Teacher Education Institutions	8.6
STW Regional Executive Committee	15.5
Tech Prep Steering Committees	19.0

NOTE: The number of respondents to these questions ranged from 570 to 573. The average number of respondents was 572. The identification of stakeholders was precoded on the questionnaires distributed to them.

Recommendations

This section presents the recommendations arising from the needs assessment. The primary recommendation, upon which all others are dependent, is presented first and followed by a set of implementation recommendations. After each of the recommendations, there is a discussion of the rationale that underlies the actions proposed.

Primary Recommendation:	**A Workforce Development Clearinghouse should be established to focus on the information needs of the various STW stakeholders in Ohio. This clearinghouse should link with existing resources and not duplicate their content. The clearinghouse should provide high quality information in an efficient and timely manner and be capable of ongoing adaptation as the needs of its clients change.**

This recommendation is based on the two-thirds of respondents who said they would access a clearinghouse and almost all of the rest who said they might access it. Only 4 percent of the respondents said they would not access a clearinghouse. Even if it is assumed that all those who did not return questionnaires would not access a clearinghouse (a very conservative assumption), the results still imply that, at a minimum, one-fourth of the stakeholders interested in STW in Ohio would access a clearinghouse. One-fourth of all those involved in STW initiatives constitutes a large pool of likely clients.

Because we know the total number of K-12 educators in Ohio is 120,633 (Ohio Department of Education, 1997), a projection of the number of these stakeholders likely to access a clearinghouse can be made fairly easily. Questionnaires were sent to the 91 Career Development Coordinators in Ohio who were asked to distribute them to designated positions (superintendents, principals, teachers, etc.) in one of the districts they serve. Sixty-one of the coordinators returned some questionnaires, but not all of the potential respondents to whom the coordinators distributed questionnaires returned them.

The responses from the coordinators represent 61 separate districts, or 10 percent of the total number in Ohio. In these districts, 64 percent of the educators who returned questionnaires said they would access a clearinghouse and an additional 31 percent said they might. Only 5 percent said they would not access a clearinghouse.

The response rate from the public schools, however, was only 26 percent. Let us assume that all of those who did not return questionnaires had not heard about STW or, if they had heard, were not interested in it. Let us further assume that none of these nonrespondents would access a clearinghouse. Applying the 64 percent who said they would access a clearinghouse to the 26 percent response rate yields 17 percent of the total original sample who reported they would use a clearinghouse. Applying this 17 percent to 120,633 educators yields a total of 20,000 likely clients. The same calculations with the 31 percent who said they might use a clearinghouse add an additional 9,700 possible users.

As a basis for evaluating the number of potential users, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, which has a national client base, as well as many international users, responds to almost 1,000 personal requests for information per month, a total of about 10,000 requests per year. (Many thousands of additional clients access the database independently, without individually contacting ERIC staff.) Even if the actual K-12 users of an Ohio clearinghouse were far fewer than the projected number, the total likely users, including all other stakeholders, are sufficient to warrant the establishment of such a resource.

Implementation Recommendation 1:	**The clearinghouse should use a variety of dissemination and delivery systems.**

The primary method used to obtain information about STW reported by respondents was reading print materials. Clearinghouses, until recently, have relied primarily on printed materials: abstracts, newsletters, issue briefs, etc. In the past decade, as personal computers became widely available, use of electronic media, especially the World Wide Web and e-mail, has increased exponentially.

Current usage of these new media, however, is still fairly limited. Only about one in five of the respondents to the needs assessment survey reported accessing the World Wide Web or using e-mail. Only 1 in 10 reported taking part in teleconferences or telebriefings. Some respondents noted that their schools did not even have fax machines.

Almost one-fourth of the respondents who indicated they would or might access the clearinghouse checked more than one method of contact. The question specifically asked the respondents to check only one method, but a substantial proportion still checked more than one. This result underscores the need for multiple ways to access the clearinghouse. The Ohio SchoolNet initiative will make electronic access increasingly available to public school educators, and the number using e-mail and the Internet is very likely to increase. Nevertheless, there will continue to be a sizeable

minority who will prefer and need alternative means, such as toll-free numbers and personal assistance.

Implementation Recommendation 2:	**The clearinghouse should emphasize personal contact in dissemination and knowledge utilization.**

The five highest ranking methods of obtaining information, following reading print materials, all involved some form of personal contact. Here are some of the suggestions to make the clearinghouse as useful as possible that were received from respondents:

- Question 4 was difficult to answer because I believe personal contact is important to disseminate accurate information and respond to specific questions. E-mail and the Web provide instant access and anonymity and certainly are the resource of today. A clearinghouse should provide a variety of resource media.
- Being able to walk in and get personal assistance
- Don't want technology to totally eliminate personal telephone assistance.
- Both b and d [combination of electronic/print plus telephone]. Have a contact available to clarify/direct persons who have questions about electronic or printed materials.

The proposed clearinghouse could respond to these preferences by attempting to develop dissemination methods that would foster opportunities for personal contacts. Some of these could be unconventional such as the establishment of an electronic "chat room."

Initiating methods that require considerable involvement of knowledgeable people, however, raises a number of issues that will have to be carefully considered. Suppose, for example, a school district is identified that has been particularly successful in recruiting employers to provide work-based learning. Could the policies and practices of that district be disseminated through personal contact without placing an unacceptable number of requests for visits on the district and its cooperating employers? Various types of personal interaction are clearly preferred ways of obtaining information, but satisfying these preferences will require creativity and innovation.

Implementation Recommendation 3:	**The clearinghouse should develop strong connections with professional development activities.**

Given the preference for personal contacts to obtain information, the clearinghouse should develop strong linkages with professional development activities. Here are some of the suggestions related to professional development that were written in by respondents:

- Teacher-to-teacher, sharing activities, plans, field trips, methodology, useful idea. Lesson plans workshops–the Lake Erie workshop was great.
- Presenting information at faculty meetings and in-service is much better than introducing the concept in print form of any type. Not everyone has bought into the idea of STW. There will be a lot of questions that need to be answered on a personal level.
- If people could be "experts" on call to come to different areas throughout the state to explain/help/setup STW in different areas, it would be most helpful. (These could be existing people who are already involved and 'know' how it works or "hired experts.")
- Regional meetings would be good to introduce concepts.
- Contact classroom teachers directly. Information is scarce at that level.

It would be beyond the scope of a clearinghouse to carry out such activities directly, but a clearinghouse could package and disseminate materials that could be used at conferences, workshops, and even faculty meetings at individual schools. The clearinghouse could also work with professional development providers to identify topics of high interest to teachers and other STW stakeholders. The information requests received by the clearinghouse would be strong indicators of interests.

Implementation Recommendation 4:	**The clearinghouse should develop materials that will foster and support increased awareness about STW in the education profession as well as correct misconceptions surrounding the initiative among all potential stakeholders.**

Despite all the attention that STW has received from elected officials, the conferences that have been held, the newsletters and websites, many educators, especially those at the school level, have little or no information. In the needs assessment survey, over 2 percent of the questionnaires were returned uncompleted, but with notes stating the respondents knew so little about STW, they could not answer the questions.

Preliminary results from the Professional Development Analysis, one of the other projects that is part of the Systems Integration Coalition being directed by the State University Education Deans, indicate that a majority of teachers and counselors feel they lack a good understanding of STW, in general, and Ohio's initiative[3].

The problem is not that there is a lack of materials about STW; the problem involves the format and dissemination of the materials. Teachers need concise, practical information, and ways must be found to deliver such information at the individual school level.

If STW is ever to fulfill its potential, the prevailing misconceptions about it must be corrected. Many of these misconceptions relate to what is seen as a premature "tracking" of young people that will limit their future options (Vo 1997). Advocates of STW state that its goal is just the reverse: STW is intended to increase options by increasing knowledge about occupations and preparation for careers. Nevertheless, to the poorly informed, the title of the initiative, in itself, reinforces the misconceptions. Ways must be found to disseminate the real goals of STW to its most skeptical audiences.

Implementation Recommendation 5:	**The clearinghouse must be capable of continually adjusting to changing client needs and technological advances.**

From the change process perspective, Ohio's STW initiative is still at the initial stage. Extensive literature on educational change documents the several stages involved in adoption and utilization of an innovation (*e.g.* Hall and Hord 1987). This literature demonstrates that, after teachers have become aware of an innovation, they are primarily concerned with learning more about it and how it affects them personally. It is only after they have moved through these initial "self" concerns that they are able to begin considering how to use the innovation.

The data from this needs assessment and the Professional Development Analysis surveys indicate that with regard to STW a majority of teachers are not yet at the awareness stage. As they become aware, they will want to know more about the implications for what they do in their classrooms. As they become more informed, they will want materials that can be used directly in the classroom, at work-based learning sites, and in connecting the two. Those teachers who requested such materials in the

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[3]Preliminary results shared with the Principal Investigators of the four projects, dated July 24, 1997.

needs assessment survey are among the early innovators who are already more informed than most of their colleagues.

As STW inititatives become more widespread, other stakeholders are also likely to seek more and different types of information. Employers will need information on how to establish work-based learning sites, how to connect these sites with school-based learning, how to prepare mentors, and on the rules and regulations governing the employment of young people. As more students become interested in STW options, they and their parents will want information on the implications of these options for their educational and career plans.

Together with these changing informational needs, investments are being made that will increase the use of electronic media to access information. SchoolNet, SchoolNet Plus, and the SchoolNet Telecommunity are spending hundreds of millions of dollars to achieve the goal of providing ". . . access to data, voice and video networks for every public school classroom in the state" (Ohio Department of Education undated). As the necessary technology infrastructure is developed–and teachers are trained in its use–electronic access to information will increase. In all likelihood, the growth will be exponential. Once there are a few teachers in each school who can use the technology, they can help others to become familiar, who, in turn, can assist more, and so on.

The clearinghouse should be designed to be responsive to these changes in information needs and technology. An advisory board, with heavy representation from teachers, could help the clearinghouse to keep in touch with changing information needs. To respond to current technology, the clearinghouse will need to have expertise in the design and maintenance of Web pages and the hypertext software that facilitates database searches and links to other sites. Being responsive to changing technology will require the clearinghouse to keep appraised of emerging technologies and their implications and suitability for information dissemination.

Implementation Recommendation 6:	The clearinghouse should emphasize information with direct applications to classrooms, work-based learning sites, and connecting activities.

The respondents are most interested in information that will help them design and implement STW initiatives. This finding implies that the clearinghouse should emphasize materials with a high potential for direct use. General and policy information and research results are of less interest.

Information on working with businesses, an essential component of STW, received the second highest mean importance rating, and information on working with community-based organizations received the eighth highest, out of 16 types of information. Somewhat surprisingly, since 84 percent of the respondents are educators, information on working with educators received fairly high importance ratings, but information about working with unions did not. The mean for educators ranked seventh, and the mean for unions ranked fifteenth. For some reason, the educators who responded to this survey feel they have a higher need for information on how to work with each other than on how to work with unions.

Here is how some of the respondents expressed their desire for useful information:

- Provide information in concise, simple language that is easily understood by readers. Provide summaries, checklists, and guidelines that are brief, functional, and relevant.
- Teachers need practical information, "how to," concise yet comprehensive.
- Keep it simple and clear.

Implementation Recommendation 7:	**The clearinghouse should avoid duplication of effort by referring and linking users to other existing resources.**

In addition to the needs assessment discussed in this report, the clearinghouse workgroup also did searches to identify existing sources of information on STW. There is no shortage of such sources. A major challenge for the proposed clearinghouse will be to define how it can complement, not duplicate, these existing resources. One of the obvious ways in which it can complement is by focusing on Ohio-specific information. The clearinghouse should receive copies of all reports produced in Ohio on STW projects It could also develop databases such as abstracts of projects currently being conducted in Ohio and directions on how to contact individuals engaged in these projects and others who have been identified as demonstrating "best practices."

Some of the respondents suggested ways that the clearinghouse could avoid duplication:

- Design system to include the plethora of information available from two-year colleges concerning their STW activity and programs. Do not replicate databases but use links from Ohio's to others.
- Use the same system in place for ERIC and add a Web site.

- Be sure it is interfaced with the national STW gateway. Except for state and regionally specific information, STW should reference the national information.
- Hurry!! Please get on-line as much as you can with hot buttons (links) to other states' and/or countries' information on STW.

The common thread in these suggestions is the use of hypertext links to other databases, which reinforces the need for such expertise in the clearinghouse.

If the proposed clearinghouse is designed and operated in line with these recommendations, it will surely play a key role in meeting Ohio's need to know about STW.

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Technical Notes

Sample and Response Rates

The emphasis on partnerships in STW is intended to involve employers and other community representatives as full stakeholders in the development of transition systems for young people. This laudable educational goal causes considerable methodological problems in the design of a needs assessment that should include representatives of the various groups to be included in the partnership. The first step in the conduct of this study was the identification of the following populations from which representatives of the several stakeholders would be selected:

- K-12 public school educators
- Teacher educators in private colleges and universities
- Teacher educators in state-supported universities
- Members of the Executive Committees for the STW regions in Ohio
- Members of the Steering Committees for the Tech Prep Consortia in Ohio
- Members of the Private Industry Councils for the Service Delivery Areas in Ohio

The last three groups include representation from employers, unions, community-based organizations, and parents.

Two methods were used to identify respondents from these groups and to distribute questionnaires. The coordinators of all the STW executive committees and Tech Prep steering committees, and the directors of the administrative entities of all the service delivery areas in Ohio were contacted with two requests: first, to complete the pilot-test draft of the questionnaire and second, to assist in the full survey. They were given two options for their assistance, either to distribute the questionnaires directly to their committees or councils, or to provide mailing lists and have Ohio State contact their members directly. For the other three groups, the distributions were made through the Career Educator Coordinators and the department chairs and deans of the teacher education colleges and universities. Table 9 summarizes how questionnaires were distributed by these two methods, and Table 10 shows the response rate by groups.

The total response to the individually addressed letters was 50.1 percent, double the 24.8 percent response through the group distribution. The lower response from the group distribution, however, was not due to lack of cooperation from the coordinators and deans. The lower response from the group distributions was because many of the potential respondents to whom the coordinators and deans distributed questionnaires did not complete them.

TABLE 9
QUESTIONNAIRE MAILING AND DISTRIBUTION

Group	Group Distribution and Return	Personal Letters to be Individually Returned
STW Regional Executive Committees through Regional Coordinators	Region 1, 35 Region 5, 35	Region 2, 22 Region 3, 18 Region 4, 30 Region 6, 30 Region 7, 20 Region 8, 31
JTP-Ohio, Private Industry Councils through the Directors of the Administrative Entity for the Service Delivery Areas	SDA 2, 29 SDA 15, 47 SDA 18, 10[a] SDA 23, 30 SDA 27, 30	SDA 18, 36 SDA 26, 24
Tech Prep Consortia Steering Committees through the Coordinators for the Consortia	Consortium, 3, 13 Consortium, 9, 40 Consortium, 12, 26 Consortium, 16, 2[a] Consortium, 18, 10 Consortium, 21, 20	Consortium, 1, 24 Consortium, 6, 33 Consortium, 10, 23 Consortium, 13, 22 Consortium, 16, 23 Consortium, 26, 13
Group Distribution and Return Only		
K-12 Public School Educators through Career Development Coordinators	Each of the 91 Career Development Coordinators was asked to complete one questionnaire and distribute 10 in the following manner: ▪ All coordinators were asked to distribute questionnaires to a superintendent, a school board member, an elementary principal, and an elementary counselor. ▪ Twenty-three coordinators were asked to distribute questionnaies to a first grade teacher and these middle/junior high staff: a principal, a counselor, a language arts, a science or math, and a social studies teachers. ▪ Twenty-three to a first and fourth grade teacher and these middle/junior high staff: a principal, a counselor a resource, and a special education teacher. ▪ Twenty-three to these high school staff: principal, counselor, a language arts, a science or math, a social studies, and a business teacher. ▪ Twenty-two to a fourth grade teacher and these high school staff: principal, counselor, a resource, a special education, and a vocational trades teacher.	
State Institutions	The 13 deans of colleges of education in state universities were each sent eight questionnaires to distribute to teacher educators in the following areas: administration, counselor education, special education, elementary, secondary/middle school, vocational, K-16 partnerships, and higher education.	
Private Teacher Education Institutions	The 35 department chairs of private colleges and universities approved for teacher education were each sent five questionnaires to distribute to teacher educators in these areas: , counselor education, special education, elementary, secondary/middle school, and higher education.	

[a] Respondent to pilot test both provided a mailing list and requested questionnaires that he/she would distribute.

TABLE 10

QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED AND USABLE RESPONSES RETURNED

Stakeholder Group	Distributed	Returned	
	N	N	%
STW Regional Executive Committees	221	89	40.3
JTP-Ohio, Private Industry Councils	206	31	15.0
Tech Prep Consortia Steering Committees	249	109	43.8
K-12 Public School Educators	1001	264	26.4
State Institutions Teacher Educators	104	49	47.1
Private Institutions Teacher Educators	175	31	17.7
Total	1956	573	29.3

As of July 22,1997, the following had returned the questionnaires that had been completed by the individuals to whom they distributed them:

- 61 of 91 career development coordinators, 67 percent
- 13 of 13 state university deans, 100 percent, and
- 14 of 35 department heads in private institutions, 40 percent.

An additional 48 questionnaires (2.5 percent of the total mailing) were returned uncompleted or with so many missing answers they were not used in the analysis. Many of these had notes indicating that those returning the questionnaires were so uninformed about STW that they did not feel they could complete them. One private institution did not participate because its only teacher preparation program was in music.

The manner in which the respondents were identified and contacted resulted in a double screening. First the individuals initially contacted had to decide to cooperate in the survey, then the potential respondents had to decide to return the questionnaire. The potential respondents in the first three groups were included because the STW and Tech Prep Coordinators and the directors of the SDA administrative entities who were contacted as part of the pilot test decided to cooperate. The public school educators and teacher educators in private colleges received questionnaires only if the career development coordinators and department chairs distributed them as we requested. The 29 percent who returned usable questionnaires are thus likely to be individuals who have a higher degree of interest in STW, in general, and the proposed

clearinghouse, in particular, than the other representatives of the stakeholder groups who did not participate in the survey.

Tests of Significant Difference

All discussions of differences among groups in percentages are based on 6 by *n* chi square analyses where 6 is the number of groups and *n* equals the number of response options. Options that were endorsed by less than 5 percent of the respondents were combined into the option with the next lowest number of endorsements. Table 11 presents the chi square results for question 3, Would you access an Ohio clearinghouse? Because the *No* option was selected by less than 5 percent of the respondents, it was combined with the *Maybe* option. All other discussions of differences among groups in percentages are based on similar analyses.

TABLE 11

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS FOR QUESTION 3, IF OHIO WERE TO ESTABLISH A CLEARINGHOUSE . . . ,WOULD YOU ACCESS IT?

Stakeholder Groups	Number Would Use	Number Maybe + No	Proportion Maybe + No
STW Regional Executive Committees	72	16	.182
JTP-Ohio, Private Industry Councils	17	14	.452
Tech Prep Consortia Steering Committees	83	26	.238
K-12 Public School Educators	166	93	.359
State Institutions Teacher Educators	35	14	.286
Private Institutions Teacher Educators	12	19	.613
Total	385	182	.321

Chi square = 27.71, *df*, = 5, $p < .001$

All discussions of differences among groups in mean importance ratings are based on the statistical test, analysis of variance. All differences discussed were significant at well below the .01 probability level. Table 12 presents one of these analyses, the results for the item that had the highest mean rating for all respondents: item 1c, information about curriculum and instructional materials appropriate for STW. All other discussion of differences among the groups are based on similar analyses.

TABLE 12

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR IMPORTANCE RATINGS OF INFORMATION ABOUT CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Stakeholder Groups	Number	Mean	Variance
STW Regional Executive Committees	87	3.36	.70
JTP-Ohio, Private Industry Councils	29	2.83	.93
Tech Prep Consortia Steering Committees	105	3.42	.63
K-12 Public School Educators	248	3.47	.52
State Institutions Teacher Educators	49	3.16	1.06
Private Institutions Teacher Educators	31	3.19	.69
Total	549	3.37	.66

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Ratio	p.
Between Groups	1665.19	5	333.04	67.55	<.001
Within Groups	2679.55	544	4.93		
Total	4344.74	549			

APPENDIX

Comments Written In by Respondents

This appendix presents a synthesis of comments from the respondents that were written in at various places in the questionnaire. Most were in response to item 9, the final, open-ended request for any suggestions "to make the proposed STW Clearinghouse for Ohio as useful as possible." Some of these comments were more appropriate to other items. When this was the case, they are included with the appropriate item. Some of the comments did not directly relate to the operation of a clearinghouse. Here are some examples:

> I believe STW in Ohio needs to research the educational activities already in place via Career Development, Vocational Education, and Tech Prep before declaring its position within the public education sector. Many initiatives are in place which STW is apparently duplicating and/or inadvertently replicating or competing. My neutral response to your questions is basically a response that says I have been engaged in the stated activities for the past nine years, long before STW came along.
>
> This is a great idea. STWs & Exec. Committees must be able to discuss funding inadequacies with Voinovich, Hollister and other State and Federal officials–Glenn, Gardner, etc.
>
> I feel like the 50+ hours I spent reviewing and rating the last round of RFPs was wasted time. I am a full-time doctoral student, run 3 business, 4 kids and serve on these committees. I've been kicked and stomped by the funding personnel and I'm frustrated. I'm also a voter. My 30+ years of expertise (myself and others included) is FREE and priceless. I'm not playing politics with my intelligence.
>
> Make K-12 teachers accountable. Institute pay for performance in all public school systems. Eliminate life-time employment for teachers (There has to be a way to remove non-performers.)
>
> This is Career Education.

Comments such as these are **not** included in the attached synthesis, because they have little to do with how a clearinghouse should operate. No tally was made of how often similar ideas were written in. The following list merely summarizes suggestions that appear to have merit for the content or operation of the proposed clearinghouse.

Additional Types of Information a Clearinghouse Should Provide (Question 1)

Marketing, Public Relations

Information designed to give parents and the general public an understanding of STW, what it means and why it will help our students.

Without a doubt, this is the most important program developed for education since vocational education. We must eliminate the "general track to nowhere." This information must reach the hands of prospective students [and] their parents as early as possible. The students must realize their career choices are not limited to fireman, nurse, doctor, teacher, plant worker.

As an elementary principal it will be a time before information filters down to us. I feel this is very pertinent for the high school students as many seniors will be entering a new work force different than in years gone by. Thus, knowing what is out there and expected will be a special component. Preparation for this and communication between the public [sic] sector and the schools will never be so important as now.

The information is already good regarding marketing, however, the infrastructure is not in place to respond to employers in the schools; not enough staff to help with connecting activities.

Information and positive public relations to encourage more employers to become involved in STW–Incentive programs.

Provide specific materials which clarify relationship between Tech Prep and STW

Best Practices

Example of best practices others have used and their success stories would be most beneficial.

Develop a portfolio of STW sites that demonstrate success

Legal Implications

Liability insurance for students in noncompensated workplace situation

Ohio STW Office "Decisions or Rulings" based on regional questions/issues. Such administrative case law will improve communication and equity among regions.

Preparing mentors for work-based learning experiences. legal implications of STW

Other Information

Clearinghouse information should include information on careers and occupational trends and be made available to school sites.

Provide information on character/ leadership development for U.S. youth.

Grant writing "How To's."

Examples of evaluations for students, teachers, employers, parents

Ohio STW personnel directory

Manual for use in training seminars

I coordinate a "job shadowing" program and have borrowed and modified STW ideas. I'd like to see a collection of forms and formats that other programs use. Modified curriculum ideas would also be helpful.

Suggestions for Access (Question 4)

Question 4 was difficult to answer because I believe personal contact is important to disseminate accurate information and respond to specific questions. E-mail and the Web provide instant access and anonymity and certainly are the resource of today. A clearinghouse should provide a variety of resource media.

Being able to walk in and get personal assistance

Don't want technology to totally eliminate personal telephone assistance.

Both b and d [combination of electronic/print plus telephone]. Have a contact available to clarify/direct persons who have questions about electronic or printed materials.

Small group, local support/study groups

Seminars and conferences

General Suggestions for a Clearinghouse (Question 9)

Change the name [School-to-Work]. It is taken very negatively

The emphasis of all STW activities must be on the quality of school work students are asked to do. They must be actively involved in learning. STW must remember education is not to be work training.

The STW idea is a good one, but there is a need for coordinated, CORRECT information. Schools receive one set of info one week, something different a week later. Employers are caught with the same conflicting information.

Easy access and user friendly. Made available to John Q. Public free of charge through public libraries for the poor and disadvantaged, and system should be able to be accessed by those with disabilities.

Well known, low cost, easy access, wide variety of materials, ability to talk directly with practitioners

The Eisenhower National Clearinghouse is very helpful. Use them as a model.

(1) Frequent newsletter with update articles and news bulletins, (2) Publish/post articles similar to Chronicle of Higher Education.

Format materials to be distinctive–special logo, color.

With so many STW catalogs floating around, ensure Ohio's is properly identified.

Information should be cross-indexed: age group use suggested, subject matter index, geographic region available

Be sure information is grouped and categorized effectively so students, parent, business clearly understand. Remember: not everyone speaks and breathes educational jargon.

Hire staff who have real experience gained from private sector employment

Use Existing Resources

Make use of the 27 Vocational Education Planning District coordinators who are currently doing an excellent job in their "first year" as STW programs. Our NW Ohio (2 coordinators) are working with each other daily and the 3 other coordinators to bring a quality STW focus for our area.

Design system to include the plethora of information available from 2-year colleges concerning their STW activity and programs. Do not replicate databases but use links from Ohio's to others.

Use Joint Vocational School structure already in place

I feel our Career Office [of a large urban district] should be mainly connected to the clearinghouse activities and bring pertinent information to our students.

Use the same system in place for ERIC and add a Web site.

Be sure it is interfaced with the national STW gateway. Except for state and regionally specific information, STW should reference the national information.

Hurry!! Please get on-line as much as you can with hot buttons (links) to other states an/or countries information on STW.

Provide Concise, Practical Information

Provide information in concise, simple language that is easily understood by readers. Provide summaries, checklists, and guidelines that are brief, functional and relevant.

Teachers need practical information, "how to," concise yet comprehensive.

Keep it simple and clear.

Suggestions Beyond the Scope of a Typical Clearinghouse

Use of Electronic Media

Use of E-mail and websites or user "chat" groups where those involved can share resources and experiences so each of us involved in STW don't have constantly to 'reinvent" the wheel.

Develop a chat room for discussion STW on web page/Internet site.

Place school counselors on-line to receive information, etc.

Create listserv and mail list to send info

Facilitating Personal Contact

Teacher-to-teacher, sharing activities, plans, field trips, methodology, useful idea. Lesson plans workshops–the Lake Erie workshop was great.

Presenting information at faculty meetings and in-service is much better than introducing the concept in print form of any type. Not everyone has bought into the

idea of STW. There will be a lot of questions that need to be answered on a personal level.

If people could be "experts" on call to come to different areas throughout the state to explain/help/setup STW in different areas, it would be most helpful. (These could be existing people who are already involved and "know" how it works or "hired experts."

Regional meetings would be good to introduce concepts.

Regional conferences for the participating organizations

Contact classroom teachers directly. Information is scarce at that level.

Other Suggestions

Technical assistance for grant writing

Do not overwhelm it with print materials. There are only so many articles that can be read. Provide regional workshops with similar demographic groups clustered. Send to everyone a simple, clear-cut, easy-to-read handbook for making proposals, grant writing, collaboration. Do have a video tape, brief, lively, to the point hands-on style in-service on grant writing, perhaps done by peers rather than professors.

(1) Statewide use plan, (2) Creation of financial assistance to implement the plan, (3) Use of persons actually working in this field rather than "idea" people

(1) A program evaluation structure that provides the needed data for any necessary modification. (2) An annual report that clearly delineates the progress and success of the program.

Keep a constant update on various projects to give a realistic view of how STW is progressing.

It would be great to implement a system like COSERRC [?] where you can have items delivered via UPS at no charge to the school.

APPENDIX TABLE 1

INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, PERCENT WHO USE SUCH INFORMATION NOW, AND PERCENT WHO WILL USE IT IN THE FUTURE

Information Used, Ranked by Mean of Importance Ratings[a]	Mean[b]	S.D.	Percent	
			Use Now	Will Use
c. Curriculum and instructional materials appropriate for STW initiatives (e.g., existing materials that can be used in STW)	3.37	.81	28	70
k. Information about working with businesses (e.g., how to make connections with business, contact information for those programs that have made connections and so forth)	3.25	.91	34	60
a. Basic developmental information (e.g., how to structure STW initiatives, guidelines for development, implementation ideas, and so forth)	3.24	.89	33	61
o. Labor market information (e.g., personnel shortages by type, location, level; predicted shortages; types of most favorable job clusters for training; preparation, knowledge, skills needed)	3.19	.89	33	63
d. How to develop instructional materials appropriate for STW (e.g., ideas for adapting existing materials or developing materials from "scratch")	3.17	.90	17	73
j. Information about STW initiatives (e.g., those programs considered as models as well as those experiencing difficulties and how they are being overcome; specific sites available for visitation and observation; and successful activities and how they were developed)	3.16	.79	19	73
n. Information about working with educators	3.15	.87	32	60
m. Information about working with community-based organizations	3.10	.85	28	62
p. Marketing information (e.g., information about STW targeted to students, parents, employers, unions general public, teachers, administrators, school boards)	3.00	.93	20	69
l. Professional/leadership development activities related to STW (e.g., specific meetings, seminars, and conferences available and useful training designed for STW coordinators and others involved in STW activities)	2.98	.93	25	63
b. Information on how to contact others who are engaged in STW activities in Ohio, by regions	2.91	.88	25	67
g. Results of research on STW	2.86	.94	12	73

APPENDIX TABLE 1, CONTINUED

INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, PERCENT WHO USE SUCH INFORMATION NOW, AND PERCENT WHO WILL USE IT IN THE FUTURE

Information Used, Ranked by Mean of Importance Ratings[a]	Mean[b]	S.D.	Percent	
			Use Now	Will Use
h. Policy information (e.g., federal and state guidelines for STW, as well as updated policies and procedures about them)	2.84	.93	18	69
e. Information about Ohio's STW activities (e.g., how is Ohio's STW system structured, RFPs, what initiatives have been funded, who directs the efforts at the state and regional levels, etc.)	2.79	.95	26	62
l. Information about working with unions	2.64	1.02	18	59
f. An overview of national STW efforts (e.g., states that are involved, focus of their activities, pilot sites and so forth)	2.48	.91	15	63

NOTE: The number of respondents to the separate items in question 1 ranged from 545 to 564. The average number of respondents over all items was 557.

[a]The alphabetic letters preceding the items indicate the numbering of the items in the questionnaire. All of these items were part of question 1.

[b]Means are based on a four-point rating scale with the numbers defined as follows:
4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = unimportant

APPENDIX TABLE 2

METHODS USED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK, MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS, PERCENT WHO USE SUCH METHODS NOW, AND PERCENT WHO WILL USE THEM IN THE FUTURE

Methods Used, Ranked by Mean of Importance Ratings[a]	Mean[b]	S.D.	Percent	
			Use Now	Will Use
a. Read relevant materials (e.g., books, journal articles, newsletters)	3.21	.77	58	46
h. Talk to a knowledgeable colleague	3.20	.82	46	50
j. Attend meetings, seminars, or conferences (e.g., professional/ leadership development activities)	3.12	.87	44	50
c. Talk to experts	3.02	.84	36	56
l. Visit and observe others engaged in similar activities	2.93	.91	25	59
b. Enroll in a workshop	2.82	.88	28	59
i. Access relevant information via telephone (e.g., toll free hotline)	2.74	.94	22	60
e. Access/search the World Wide Web	2.66	.98	21	61
m. Request and receive information via fax	2.62	.93	30	52
d. Send inquiries and receive information via e-mail	2.56	.93	18	60
f. Search electronic databases	2.51	.95	14	60
g. Ask a librarian for assistance	2.28	.90	22	50
k. Teleconferences, telebriefings	2.20	.89	10	57

NOTE: The number of respondents to the separate items in question 2 ranged from 517 to 561. The average number of respondents over all items was 539.

[a]The alphabetic letters preceding the items indicate the numbering of the items in the questionnaire. All of these items were part of question 2.

[b]Means are based on a four-point rating scale with the numbers defined as follows:
4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = unimportant

STW Workforce Development Clearinghouse Questionnaire

Please respond to the items in this questionnaire with reference to the School-To-Work (STW) system Ohio is developing. The mission statement for that system is as follows:

> ***The mission of Ohio's school-to-work system is to ensure that every Ohio student graduates from high school and beyond with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the ever-changing world of work – and is prepared for lifelong learning.***

Information about STW

1. Below is a list of categories of school-to-work information. For each category, indicate whether you use now and/or will use this type of information if it becomes available in the next 6 to 12 months by placing a √ on the lines under "*Use Now*" and "*Will Use.*" Also, rate the importance of the category using a scale of 1 through 4 with--

   4 = *very important*
   3 = *important*
   2 = *neutral*
   1 = *unimportant*

Use Now (√)	Will Use (√)	Importance [1 (unimportant) to 4 (very important)]		
_____	_____	_____	a.	Basic developmental information (e.g., how to structure STW initiatives, guidelines for development, implementation ideas, and so forth)
_____	_____	_____	b.	Information on how to contact others who are engaged in STW activities in Ohio, by regions
_____	_____	_____	c.	Curriculum and instructional materials appropriate for STW initiatives (e.g., existing materials that can be used in STW)
_____	_____	_____	d.	How to develop instructional materials appropriate for STW (e.g., ideas for adapting existing materials or developing materials from "scratch")
_____	_____	_____	e.	Information about Ohio's STW activities (e.g., how is Ohio's STW system structured, RFPs, what initiatives have been funded, who directs the efforts at the state and regional levels, etc.)
_____	_____	_____	f.	An overview of national STW efforts (e.g., states that are involved, focus of their activities, pilot sites and so forth)
_____	_____	_____	g.	Results of research on STW
_____	_____	_____	h.	Policy information (e.g., federal and state guidelines for STW, as well as updated policies and procedures about them)
_____	_____	_____	i.	Professional/leadership development activities related to STW (e.g., specific meetings, seminars, and conferences available and useful training designed for STW coordinators and others involved in STW activities)
_____	_____	_____	j.	Information about STW initiatives (e.g., those programs considered as models as well as those experiencing difficulties and how they are being overcome; specific sites available for visitation and observation; and successful activities and how they were developed)

Use Now (√)	Will Use (√)	Importance [1 (unimportant) to 4 (very important)]		
_____	_____	_____	k.	Information about working with businesses (e.g., how to make connections with business, contact information for those programs that have made connections and so forth)
_____	_____	_____	l.	Information about working with unions
_____	_____	_____	m.	Information about working with community-based organizations
_____	_____	_____	n.	Information about working with educators
_____	_____	_____	o	Labor market information (e.g., personnel shortages by type, location, level; predicted shortages; types of most favorable job clusters for training; preparation, knowledge, skills needed)
_____	_____	_____	p.	Marketing information (e.g., information about STW targeted to students, parents, employers, unions general public, teachers, administrators, school boards)
_____	_____	_____	q.	Other (please list) _____

Methods to Obtain Information

2. Below are some current methods of obtaining information about STW. For each method, indicate whether you use now and/or will use in the future by placing a √ on the lines under "*Use Now*" and "*Will Use.*" Also, rate how important it is to you to receive information via the method using a scale of 1 to 4 with --

4 = *very important*
3 = *important*
2 = *neutral*
1 = *unimportant*

Use Now (√)	Will Use (√)	Importance [1 (unimportant) to 4 (very important)]		
_____	_____	_____	a.	Read relevant materials (e.g., books, journal articles, newsletters)
_____	_____	_____	b.	Enroll in a workshop
_____	_____	_____	c.	Talk to experts
_____	_____	_____	d.	Send inquiries and receive information via e-mail
_____	_____	_____	e.	Access/search the World Wide Web
_____	_____	_____	f.	Search electronic databases
_____	_____	_____	g.	Ask a librarian for assistance
_____	_____	_____	h.	Talk to a knowledgeable colleague
_____	_____	_____	i.	Access relevant information via telephone (e.g., toll free hotline)

Use Now (√)	Will Use (√)	Importance [1 (unimportant) to 4 (very important)]		
_____	_____	_____	j.	Attend meetings, seminars, or conferences (e.g., professional/leadership development activities)
_____	_____	_____	k.	Teleconferences, telebriefings
_____	_____	_____	l.	Visit and observe others engaged in similar activities
_____	_____	_____	m.	Request and receive information via fax
_____	_____	_____	n.	Other (please describe) _____

3. If Ohio were to establish a Clearinghouse that would provide current sources of STW information, including Ohio, and regionally specific STW information, would you access it?

_____a. Yes _____b. No _____c. Maybe

4. If you answered ***yes*** or ***maybe*** to question 3, which of the following kind of access would you ***most*** prefer ? (Check only one.)

_____ a. Only through the Web

_____ b. A combination of electronic information (Web and e-mail), and print information

_____ c. Personal assistance

_____ d. Telephone

_____ e Other (please specify)_____

5.. Which of the following describes the geographic area that your organization serves? (Check as many as apply..)

_____ a. Urban (city of 50,000 or more) _____ b. Suburban (separate city in Urban area) _____ c Small city, village _____ d. Rural

6. Check which category **best** describes your organization. (Check only one.)

_____ a. Small Business (Under 100 employees)

_____ b. Medium Sized Business (100 to 499 employees)

_____ c. Large Business (Over 500 employees)

_____ d. Public Sector (local or state government, e.g., Human Services, JTP-Ohio)

_____ e. Community-Based Organization

_____ f. Elementary School

_____ g. Middle School.

_____ h . High School

_____ I. Central Office(K-12 district)

_____ j. Two-year technical school or community college

_____ k. Four-year College or University

_____ o. Other (please specify)

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(OVER)→

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7. Check which category **best** describes your role/position/title in the organization. (Check only one.)

_____ a. President, CEO, Executive Director, Chairperson, Superintendent

_____ b. Associate Director, Principal, Coordinator

_____ c. Supervisor, Associate, Teacher, Counselor

_____ d. Parent, student

8. We ask the following questions to determine if this survey has collected information that will assist the proposed Clearinghouse to serve all clients on an equitable basis.

a. Your gender is--

_____ Male

_____ Female

b. Your Ethnic/Racial Background is--

_____ American Indian or Alaskan Indian

_____ Asian or Pacific Islander

_____ Black (not of Hispanic Origin)

_____ Hispanic

_____ White (not of Hispanic Origin)

_____ Multiracial

_____ Other (please specify) _____

9. Please use the space below to suggest ideas to make the proposed STW Clearinghouse for Ohio as useful as possible

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the manner indicated in the cover letter.
If you need additional information, contact Susan Imel or Morgan Lewis at 800-848-4815

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